



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Summary

Main Feature

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A MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

It's hard to believe that half the year has already gone. Much of the focus for the ACT Office of the ABS recently has been in assisting the ACT Government to access the data that they need. We have also just released Regional Statistics, ACT, incorporating a range of indicators for all suburbs in the ACT and for Queanbeyan. We are also busy preparing for the release of ACT in Focus 2003, our annual summary of the ACT and region.

One of the important initiatives recently completed was the installation of an online statistical service to the ACT Government, ABS@ACT Government. This facility has all ABS publications released since 1998, a range of detailed datasets and a large amount of population census data. This service has been complemented by the provision of training courses to provide ACT Government staff with the skills they need to effectively access and use data.

An Information Development Plan has just been signed with the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services. This Plan identifies the current priorities for the Department and assesses information needs against those priorities. Where data gaps or deficiencies are identified, actions are specified to address these. These actions are jointly managed between the Department and the ABS.

Don't forget to grab a copy of our two annual publications, **Regional Statistics ACT 2003** (cat. no. 1362.8.55.001) - out now and

ACT in Focus 2003 (cat. no. 1307.8) - due out in early September and remember that comments on our publications are always appreciated.

Tracy Stewart
Regional Director,
ACT Office, Australian Bureau of Statistics

ABS@ACT Government

STATISTICAL TOOL TO LEAD TO BETTER INFORMED POLICY MAKING

ACT Public Servants now have immediate access to the latest ABS statistical data from their computer desktops. ABS@ACT Government, an online statistical resource, was the subject of an executive briefing by Chief Minister Jon Stanhope and Australian Statistician Dennis Trewin given on Wednesday 9 April 2003.

ACT public service executives were told that the Chief Minister believed that the key to good policy making is in having access to up-to-date research.

The Chief Ministers words were delivered by MLA Karin McDonald and the following are highlights from his speech.

"A key role of politicians and the public servants that support them is to set policies that fundamentally affect citizens' lives for the better. The decisions my Government makes are based on three pillars that hold up responsible government for our community: consultation, research and principled decision making.

All our public servants now have instant access to an extensive resource that has in the past been significantly more cumbersome and costly. When we talk about clever, informed policy making, this is the kind of tool we're talking about.

As a community, and as a government, we face significant social challenges in the coming years. We are currently developing the Canberra Plan as our strategic approach for the next two decades.

Statistical analysis enables us as decision makers to formulate policy to help Canberra, and Canberrans, reach their full potential.

ABS@ACT Government, and other research tools the public service now has at its disposal, present clear opportunities for greater understanding not just of the changes occurring in our society, but the demands these changes place on our services.

It's a policy tool that can be just as valuable to those who help set our school curriculum as it is to those advising the Government on next year's budget.

The introduction of ABS@ACT Government, and the ongoing close relationship between the ACT Government and the ABS enables us to be at the forefront of change, and to progress along a path of better decision making for a better Canberra."



Tracy Stewart, Dennis Trewin and Karin McDonald at the ABS@ACT Government launch.

The Australian Statistician Mr Dennis Trewin responded to the Chief Minister's speech and the following are highlights from his address.

"Australia's statistical resources are an essential tool for governments and all Australians to assess the past, plan for the future and to make and evaluate public policy. As Australia's central statistical agency, the ABS has a key role to play," Mr Trewin said.

"However, much statistical information resides in the administrative systems of government agencies as well as statistical collections conducted by them and we see these datasets, together with those held by the ABS, as a key ingredients in what we call the national statistical service.

ABS@ is one of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' most successful dissemination initiatives. It has already been implemented on many sites, including several State and Territory governments. In the case of the ACT, it will allow staff working in the ACT Government access to an electronic container of ABS publications and other data via the ACT Government intranet. This effectively means that all staff across ACT Government can have instant access to the latest statistics at their fingertips.

The service contains all ABS publications released from 1998 onwards, with new publications being available on-line on the day of release. It has more detailed time series tables available in spreadsheet format, and a large range of Population Census data and more.

We are continuing to increase the content available through the ABS@ACT Government service. As well as the data content, ABS@ACT Government has a facility for on-line discussions and contains a range of supporting material, such as ABS media releases and the catalogue of publications.

Additionally, and importantly, ABS@ACT Government has a facility that allows ACT Government data to be quickly and easily loaded to the system, allowing for important information to be shared across government to enhance the breadth and depth of information available to all ACT Government staff.

ABS@ACT Government is a service that will increase the capacity of ACT Government staff to access ABS information they need for informed decision making. It is also a service which will facilitate ACT government agencies access to a broader range of information if they choose to use it in that way.

There are many advantages for ACT Government staff in using ABS@ACT Government. These include greater and more timely access to a wide range of statistical information; ease of access as it is an on-line service; reduced costs for information acquisition and data management; and improved management, storage and retrieval of information."

To access this innovative product, ACT Government staff simply use their web browser and type in HALE and click on the ABS logo. This will then give access to all the features of the ABS@ACT Government product.

For more information please contact Alan Masters on (02) 6207 0286, or alan.masters@abs.gov.au

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General Social Survey

General Social Survey, Australia, 2002 (cat. no. 4159.0) is due for release in July 2003. The General Social Survey (GSS) is the first of its type conducted by the ABS. Rather than concentrating in detail on a particular area of social concern, the GSS publication provides a wide range of social information about individuals, making it possible to explore linkages between areas of social concern. Topics include: health; housing; education; work; income; financial stress; assets and liabilities; family and community; transport; and crime. Both national and state level estimates will be available from the survey. State level data will be available on the ABS website. A GSS Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) is expected for release in September 2003. A Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) is also expected to be available from the GSS. ABS can provide customised GSS output on a fee for service basis.

For more information contact Graeme Groves on (02) 6252 5943, or graeme.groves@abs.gov.au

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AusStats

AUSSTATS FAQ'S

What is AusStats?

AusStats is a new web based information service available by subscription from the (ABS). As AusStats is an extension of the ABS web site (www.abs.gov.au), all you will require to take advantage of this service is connection to the World Wide Web.

What information is available through AusStats?

AusStats allows access to a wide range of information, including:

- All ABS publications from 1998 onwards
- Over 2,000 spreadsheets of economic and social data
- Multi-dimensional datasets (sometimes called data cubes) in SuperTABLE format
- 1996 Census Basic Community Profiles to the Statistical Local Area (SLA) level
- Free summary information including Main Features, Release Advices & Australia Now

What is a dataset?

A dataset is a file that contains a number of classifications and counting items. Datasets are in SuperTABLE format.

What is 'SuperTABLE'?

SuperTABLE is tabulation software developed by Space-Time Research. SuperTABLE allows you to create tables by manipulating the classifications and counting items in datasets. You can obtain a free copy of SpaceTime Research's SuperTABLE software from their web site (www.str.com.au) - a link to this is included in AusStats.

Why should I subscribe to the service?

AusStats offers a complete information focussed service with:

- A broad range of content
- Current information - updated daily at 11.30 am, with no delivery delay
- Convenient access for individual or corporate clients via the ABS web site. Individual clients can use the service from any location (this is not available at the domain level)

What other benefits can AusStats offer me?

- Information is linked between related products (both free and charged) - For example, AusStats spreadsheets are linked to relevant publications.
- Full text search facility which makes finding data easier.
- Bookmarking facilities allowing the convenience of marking any regularly visited page in your web browser and returning to them at any time for a quick reference.
- AusStats includes a question and answer section, addressing common queries.
- You only pay full price the first time you download a particular issue of a file; the cost for subsequent downloads of the same issue is only 10% of the full rate. Using AusStats as your ABS library will help you manage your data more efficiently.

Can I trial AusStats?

Log on to the ABS web site today and see for yourself what AusStats has to offer. You can access the free summary information and view the range of charged material, by browsing through the service. You won't be able to download the charged files which are available only by subscription. However, you can use the free sample data, where examples of downloadable files will be included.

These files will contain older data.

How do I access AusStats?

AusStats is an integral part of the ABS web site at www.abs.gov.au. AusStats content exists in the following areas on the ABS web site:

- Publications
- Spreadsheets
- Multi-dimensional datasets
- 1996 Census Basic Community Profiles
- Australia Now
- ABS On-line Catalogue
- Release Information
- Media Releases

What do I need to use AusStats?

You will need access to the World Wide Web, and an Internet browser such as Internet Explorer or Netscape. Publications are available in Adobe Acrobat format. To view a publication at your computer, or to print a fully formatted document, you'll need Acrobat Reader, available free from Adobe's web site (www.adobe.com). Spreadsheet files can be accessed using Microsoft Excel, Lotus 1-2-3 or a spreadsheet program capable of reading these files. To make use of the rich array of dataset information, you'll also need SpaceTime Research's SuperTABLE software, available free from their web site (www.str.com.au).

How much will AusStats cost?

AusStats is available by annual subscription, with prices starting at \$1,080. You can choose from a range of subscription options. Each of these options allows access to a preset value of ABS material that is greater than the subscription paid. For example, a \$1,080 subscription will allow you access to \$1,200 of ABS material via AusStats, making it a very effective discount.

Can I monitor my usage?

Yes. All AusStats accesses will be logged, and information about what you accessed will be kept. The logs will be used to create quarterly reports showing how you are progressing with your subscription.

Better decision making with AusStats . . .

Reliable. Authoritative. Convenient.

For Futher information please contact James Holt on (02) 6207 0244 or james.holt@abs.gov.au

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Bookshop

The ABS bookshop offers a range of products and publications to browse through and purchase. There is a wide selection of recently released publications on display including a selection focusing on the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales. Recent issues of national publications are also on display.

The bookshop is open to the public from 9.00am until 4:30pm every working day and the bookshop welcomes clients to come in and browse. Staff are always available to help locate data and assist with enquiries.

There are also a variety of brochures on ABS statistics and publications on display.

The ABS bookshop is located on level 5 of the QBE Insurance Building, 33 Ainslie Avenue, Canberra City.

For more information please phone the bookshop on (02) 6207 0326.

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Information Development Plan

DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SIGNS OFF ON A NEW IDP

Sandra Lambert, CEO of the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services and Tracy Stewart, Regional Director, ABS ACT Regional Office, attended a formal signing ceremony on 28 May 2003 for the completion and presentation of the jointly

developed Information Development Plan titled Plan to improve the quality, coverage and use of ACT disability, housing and community services statistics 2003.

The production of the plan is a significant component of the Department's mission to continuously improve disability, housing and community services in the ACT. The Department has been supported by the ACT office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics to review its information needs and gaps, to agree the priorities for improvement in statistics and how to address these priorities.

While the Plan focusses on improving the quality, coverage and use of statistics, the consultations to develop this Plan have also assisted the Department to identify related improvements, such as in data management, contract management, and research and analysis.

The Plan to improve the quality, coverage and use of ACT disability, housing and community services statistics 2003 is an agreement between the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services and the ACT ABS Office on the suite of information required to support policy, planning and accountability. It outlines the work planned for the next three years to address gaps in information in priority areas.

The Plan provides a clear picture of data needs against major policy and reporting requirements and how these information needs will be addressed.

What does the plan provide?

The Plan provides:

- a map of statistical information and work planned or underway to improve data for the sectors in the ACT
- a set of priorities and recommendations designed to improve the quality, coverage and use of disability, housing and community services information in the ACT.

The Plan informs resource decisions for data improvement by providing:

- a clear picture of data needs against major policy and reporting needs and
- how these information needs could be addressed.

There is a focus in the Plan on better using existing data rather than additional collections:

- recognising that there is much data that is not used adequately, or even known about, and
- there should firstly be a focus on better understanding and analysis of existing data, and increasing skills and capacity to do this.

ACT public servants can view the plan under ABS@ACTGov. Simply log on to ABS@ on the HALE server, open Information Consultancies, and view under ABS Consultancies - Whats New in ABS@.

For more information please contact Tracy Stewart, Regional Director, ABS ACT Regional Office on (02) 6207 0283 or tracy.stewart@abs.gov.au

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INCREASE YOUR STATISTICAL SKILLS

About Statistical Training

The ABS provides a comprehensive range of statistical training for developing the statistical skills needed for producing and understanding high quality statistics and making informed decisions. Our training courses teach practical skills through formal presentation and interactive discussion combined with the involvement of participants in individual and group exercises.

Over the 2003-04 financial year, we will be running the following courses:

Turning Data Into Information

The Turning Data into Information course is intended to provide skills in analytical processes and techniques applicable for transforming data into meaningful information. This is particularly in respect to social policy issues. Material has been focussed towards people involved with policy development, reporting results of social statistics collections, and monitoring and evaluating processes in a social context. This course is aimed particularly at people new to data analysis, with the more complex techniques being covered in the Basic Statistical Analysis course.

Basic Statistical Analysis

This course develops skills in basic statistical and graphical data analysis techniques. Practical experience is gained through spreadsheet exercises. The course is aimed at people who need to learn how to analyse and describe data that has been collected in surveys. No previous spreadsheet knowledge is required.

Introduction to Data Management

This course aims to give participants the skills to maximise the quality and value of data collected across an organisation or subject area. It examines the use of statistical standards in the data collection process, the compilation, storage and maintenance of survey metadata (information about data), the storage and maintenance of data holdings and providing data dissemination strategies that are effective at meeting users information needs.

Making Quality Informed Decisions

This course explores issues relating to quality and how to evaluate the quality of a particular data set. It covers the ABS data quality framework and how to make decisions based on statistics.

Understanding Demographic Data

The course provides an understanding of the framework of demographic data and the processes which shape the population. The course covers the relationship between Census data and Estimated Resident Population data; components of population growth; population projections; estimating the population of small areas; some tools for analysing demographic data and population dynamics.

For further details on course content, timing and costs please contact Rod Campbell on 02 6207 0446 or rod.campbell@abs.gov.au

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ACT Statistical Indicators

The March quarterly issue of **ACT Statistical Indicators** (cat. no. 1367.8) was released on April 30th 2003. This publication includes a broad range of information detailed analysis of the recent trends and movements in key demographic, economic and labour market statistics. The new issue includes two feature articles on 'Lone Parents in the ACT' and 'ACT Schools'.

Lone Parents:

This feature article particular attention to the differences between lone mothers and lone fathers in the ACT in respect of marital status, employment status, income and child-care arrangements. In this article ACT figures are compared to both state/territory and national figures.

- The proportion of one parent families in the ACT has increased in the latest Census figures up 20% in the 1991 Census to 24% in the 2001 Census.
- The proportion of lone parents who had never married also increased in the ACT, from 19% of all lone parents in 1996 to 20% in 2001.
- In the ACT child-care was used by 73% of children in one parent families and 50% of children in couple families.
- Lone fathers are more likely to be in a higher weekly income bracket than lone mothers.

ACT Schools:

This feature article examines schools and schooling in the ACT.

- From 1992 to 2002 the number of schools in the ACT rose by 4%.
- In the ACT 67% of schools were primary schools, 20% were secondary and 9% were combined schools in 2002.
- The ACT has the highest participation rate for full-time students aged 15-18 years of all states and territories since 1992.

Australian Capital Territory Statistical Indicators (cat. no. 1367.8) also publishes a range of indicators to give a clear picture of the ACT. These indicators include demography, labour force, prices, building and construction, crime and justice, finance, retail, the economy, transport and climate.

For more information please contact Rod Campbell on 02 6207 0446 or rod.campbell@abs.gov.au

Order your copy now for only \$26.00

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ACT Regional Statistics

ACT Regional Statistics 2003 (1362.8.55.001) released on 24 June has a range of regional statistics for the ACT and nearby New South Wales.

The publication presents a summary of the latest available key statistics, at the time of preparation, for each of the Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) or Statistical Sub-Divisions (SSDs) of the ACT, as well as for Queanbeyan City and Yarrowlumla Shire - Part A which

make up the Queanbeyan Statistical Sub-Division. The total geographic area of coverage of these statistics is the Canberra-Queanbeyan Statistical District plus ACT Balance.

The publication contains data on a wide-range of subjects such as:

- rate of population growth and age distribution
- employment size and industry classification of businesses
- labour market and unemployment rate data
- number and value of building approvals
- number of schools and student enrolments
- number of social security recipients and dependency ratios
- mean taxable income by Statistical Subdivision.
- It includes a map of each region according to the Census of Population and Housing boundaries as at 30 June 2001.

Some interesting highlights include:

- At 30 June 2002, the preliminary estimated resident population density in the ACT was 137 people per square kilometre with Woden Valley having the highest population density in the ACT.
- In 2001, there were 1,419 deaths registered in the ACT, an increase of 9% from 2000.
- There were 3,550 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Indigenous) people in the ACT, representing 1% of the total ACT population.
- There were 457 drug offences reported in the ACT.

For more information please contact Antony Perera on (02) 6207 0315 or antony.perera@abs.gov.au

Order your copy now for only \$25.00

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Other ABS News

INDIGENOUS SOCIAL SURVEY

Enumeration of the first Indigenous Social Survey (ISS) commenced in August 2002 and was completed in April 2003. Information was collected by personal interview from Indigenous people aged 15 years and over throughout Australia, including those living in remote and very remote areas. The ISS will provide a range of information relating to the social, health and economic circumstances and cultural participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The topics included in the ISS are housing, education, employment, transport and mobility, health, sport, family and community, information technology, culture, crime and justice and income.

The ISS will allow the exploration of relationships between various dimensions of social concern such as health, housing, education and employment. Many ISS data items are shared with the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS) which will enable comparisons with the broader Australian population. The ISS also has data items in common with the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS), making it possible to analyse changes over time.

Initial Results from the ISS will be published in a summary publication in November 2003. A summary of key issues will also be available on the ABS website.

For further informationn please contact Grazyna Majchrzak-Hamilton on (02) 6252 5055 or graz.hamilton@abs.gov.au

CRIMINAL COURTS, AUSTRALIA (cat. no. 4513.0)

This publication, released on 9 April 2003, presents statistics relating to the criminal jurisdiction of the Higher (Supreme and Intermediate) and Magistrates' Courts of Australia, for the period 1 July 2001-30 June 2002. The criminal jurisdiction of the courts is responsible for trying and sentencing persons or organisations charged with criminal offences. The statistics are based on data extracted from administrative records held by state and territory agencies responsible for courts administration.

The publication provides a picture of the characteristics of defendants dealt with by the Higher Criminal Courts, including information on the offences and sentence types associated with those defendants. Offence and sentence type data is also included, as is summary data relating to the criminal workload of the Higher Courts for individual years from 1996-97 onwards. For the first time in this publication, information on the characteristics of defendants finalised in the criminal jurisdiction of the Magistrates' Courts, including offence and sentence type information associated with those defendants, is presented. These tables have been labelled experimental and are included in Appendix 1 of the publication.

For further information, email crime.justice@abs.gov.au.

2002-2101 POPULATION PROJECTIONS, AUSTRALIA (cat. no. 3222.0)

The Demography Section of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has commenced work on the 2002-2101 population projections for Australia, the states and territories, and for each capital city and balance of state/territory. It is proposed that the projections for Australia go out to the year 2101 while the state/territory and the capital city/balance of state/territory projections go out to 2051. **The Population Projections, Australia** (cat. no. 3222.0) publication is scheduled for release in August 2003.

The ABS uses the cohort-component method for these projections, which requires various assumptions to be made on future levels of fertility, mortality, overseas migration and interstate migration. This method begins with a base population for each sex by single years of age and advances it year by year by applying these assumptions. These assumptions are formulated on the basis of past demographic trends, both in Australia and overseas.

For more information please contact Katrina Phelan on (02) 6252 6573 or e-mail katrina.phelan@abs.gov.au

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Expected Major Annual and Irregular Releases

General:

1307.8 Australian Capital Territory in Focus (September)

1314.8 Australian Capital Territory at a Glance (September)

Census:

2033.8.30.001 Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australian Capital Territory, 2001 (September)
2037.0 Household Sample File, 2001 (July)
2049.0 Country Matters: Social Atlas of Rural and Regional Australia, 2001 (September)

Social:

3310.0 Marriages and Divorces, Australia, 2002 (August)
4114.0 Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events, Australia, March to July 2002 (August)
4130.0 Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia, 2000-01 (September)
4156.0 Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia, 2003 (July)
4159.0 General Social Survey, Australia, 2002 (July)
4183.0 Cultural Funding by Government, Australia, 2001-02 (July)
4390.0 Private Hospitals, Australia, 2001-02 (July)
4613.0 Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends, 2003 (July)
4704.0 The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, 2003 (August)
4713.8.55.001 Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, ACT, August 2001 (July)
4810.0.55.001 Breastfeeding in Australia, 2001 (September)
4815.0.55.001 National Health Survey: Private Health Insurance, Australia, 2001 (September)

Environment:

4614.0 Information Paper: An Alternate Industry View of the Environment Industry: Waste Management and Recycling Services, 2003 (September)

Labour and Prices:

6523.0 Income Distribution, Australia, 2000-01 (July)

Business and Industry:

7106.0 Australian Farming in Brief, 2003 (July)
8104.0 Research and Experimental Development, Businesses, Australia, 2001-02 (August)
8146.0 Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2001-02 (August)
8558.0 Employment Services, Australia, 2001-02 (July)
8685.0 Private Medical Practice Industry, Australia, 2001-02 (August)

This listing shows a selection of ABS publications expected to be released over the coming quarter. The expected month of release is shown in brackets. Release dates may vary from those shown. Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the **Catalogue of Publications and Products** (cat. no. 1101.0) which is available from any ABS office or the ABS web site. The web site also provides daily release information.

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Entry Points to the ABS ACT Office

BOOKSHOP

Office Hours: 9am to 4.30pm Mon to Fri

Level 5
QBE Insurance Building
33 Ainslie Avenue
Canberra City

POSTAL ADDRESS:**NATIONAL DIAL A STATISTIC LINE**

(for main economic indicators other than CPI) (75c per minute)

CPI INFORMATION LINE**WEB SITE:**

Ph. (02) 6207 0326

Fax (02) 6207 0282

ACT ABS Office

Locked Bag 10

BELCONNEN ACT 2616

1900 986 400

1902 981 074 (75c per minute)

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About this release

ABStract - Statistical News: Australian Capital Territory provides new and relevant information about survey developments, information and training sessions, user consultations, major changes to the statistical program, state/territory data releases and significant ABS data releases.